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## ON BODIES, MUSICAL BODIES, DANCING BODIES, AND BODIES WITHOUT ORGANS

NONMUSIC BODY, BODY WITHOUT ORGANS, DANCE, DELEUZE/GUATTARI, MILLE PLATEAUX, NON-LARUELLE, QUANTUM THEORY, RAVE

### NEGATIVE BEING

The Body-without-Organs (BwO) is like the Tao, in that it just about always escapes definition, always evading the words. In simple terms, it is like a sheet of white paper. In more complex terms it is like “union” without any sense of the Transcendental. There is no surpassing of experience

and no escaping the interior. Where might the beyond be if one might go there?

This does not seem like the place to discuss metaphysics, but there is precisely no place where it would be better said. Let us take out some of our most precious findings from a hidden stash pocket in our cloak, and lay them on the dirty table like black market merchandise. Let us do some dirty metaphysics.

One problem that is always being discussed within the dialogue of competing ideologies and theories is the element of the transcendental, which in some senses pertains to a matter of interiority and exteriority. To ask the question “is there an outside of the universe” is quite a simple question, but it is a matter which is entangled in a thick web. Other forms of this question could include: “is God the totality/summation of all, or are we cast beneath God, separate, distinct, subjected?” Another form of this question could be: “if the universe is expanding, what is it expanding into?”

“The contrived nature of the inflationary model and its failure, so far, to connect with fundamental physics in a simple way provide powerful reasons for seriously considering alternatives. The second common objection and, for many, the most disturbing feature of the inflationary model by far is the idea that time has a “beginning.” How did the universe start, if there was nothing before it? The notion sounds contradictory, and maybe even nonsensical.” (Neil Turok & Paul Steinhardt, 2007; 25)

“The old directive slogan of philosophy – to constitute itself into a “science of philosophy” which, without being positive, would make use of science and, without being transcendental, would make use of philosophy, so as to constitute itself from within and without itself-became possible and operative as soon as its model became quantum physics; and when, moreover, it found a type of combination called ‘unilateral’ operating from within (philosophy) and without (the quantum model), that would not be philosophical but “generic.” This combination is established experimentally in a matrix – an apparatus that treats dualities in a unilateral manner distinct from all philosophical dialectic. The solution lies in a new arrangement, unilateral and complementary rather than dialectical, of these dualities.” (Laruelle, 2013; xxii)

The “meta” appears to be that most of the heroes of the Enlightenment favoured separation, and favoured Ontologies which were inclusive or dependent upon the element of the Transcendental. The story goes that Spinoza was considered a heretic for his philosophy which did not include this dimension of exteriority of Being: “the latter declared himself a Spinozist. At the time this was an incendiary claim, since being a Spinozist meant as much as being a radical atheist” (Dolar, 2017; 6).

It is a cliché now to say that “Heaven isn’t a place, it’s a state of mind, or it’s here on earth with the love in our hearts” or whatever, but actually it seems that saying such a thing in history could have been taken as heresy. Perhaps it is as simple as saying that the idea of the Transcendental was a key concept in the machinery or technologies of power of the time (Han, 2017; 39), so *they* couldn’t have anyone suggesting an alternative concept that undermined some of the metaphysics upon which the necessary narratives and mythologies sit upon. The idea that you

are part of God, as in, a cog in the machinery of God, is a very different power relation than being 'the child of God' or being 'made in God's Image', in one sense you are god, in the other, you are a subject of God.

Deleuze and Guattari invested a lot of energy into reanimating the metaphysics of the antichrist and were part of a movement which helped bring a huge shift in how metaphysics and philosophy was thought of; they were to philosophy what Quantum Theory, or Neils Bohr, was to Science. If there is no dimension into which one can transcend, there is nowhere for the universe to expand into, to inflate into, then all transcendental experience must be re-explained as a matter of interiority. All Being, all matter, all that is, is one (one becoming). All of the machinery in the universe make up the totality of the universe, the limits of the machines are the limits of the space; the universe condenses rather than expands, and the only Images that we have to try and imagine such a kind of "negative expansion" comes in the form of 4D-simulation animations, infinite fractal elaboration (infinite without excess or adding).

Infinity is a tricky concept no matter what perspective you look at it,  $1 \times \text{infinity}$  is still infinity,  $10 \times \text{infinity}$  is still infinity; there are different kinds of infinity, different scales of infinity. Yet, when you lay it out flat, it is not difficult to conceptualise how something infinite can expand infinitely into its own body and remain infinite. It doesn't matter how many infinities you count, it is still the same, 1 infinity, 2 infinity, 3 infinity, 4 — the quantifier absolutely fails to quantify, because to quantify is to render absolutes. You can put a border around a random point, and call it "1", and from there you can quantify, but the initial demarcation is arbitrary, and the "1", too. Infinity ironically haunts the mathematical search for the objective, like this absolute ceiling on what can be considered "objectively", not that there is a ceiling on the universe, but there is a ceiling on what can be objective.

We cannot comprehend the kind of complex motion that is involved in dealing with infinite surfaces, the essence is buried somewhere in the Images of vibrational modes, mandelbrot fractals, entangled fields and striated, rippled surfaces that curl back in on themselves like these aforementioned fractals — always managing to readjust the entirety of itself to allow for the fractal tentacles to continue finding more space within its own folds. There is infinite empty space within every atom, so the idea of finding space to expand into, internally, is quite plausible.

You can go deeper, you can always go deeper, but you can never exceed what already was. Transcendence is a matter of exteriority, and what we are in search of is the antithesis of that — within this dirty metaphysics, the only way out is through, and the only place to go is deeper. The deeper you go, eventually you come back out the other side, but it is not the crossing of a threshold, but the multidimensional equivalent of digging through the centre of the earth and coming out on the other side. Neil Turok comes to mind, a professor who advocates, to our pleasure, minimalism, as a solution to the complex problems (See "The Astonishing Simplicity of Everything Lecture"). The simpler the solution, the more true it could be considered. Something interesting about Turok's work is that it includes the idea of humans existing at the centre of universal complexity. He explicates a view of the universe as a kind of multidimensional sphere, with simplicity at its limits, and complexity in its centre. Everything smaller than us, is simpler, and

everything bigger is simpler, in many areas of scientific study at least.

“All the indications are that the universe is at its simplest at the smallest and largest scales: the Planck length and the Hubble length. It may be no coincidence that the size of a living cell is the geometric mean of these two fundamental lengths. This is the scale of life, the realm we inhabit, and it is the scale of maximum complexity in the universe” (Turok, 2012; 268).

It is not to say that complexity is located within us, or in the space we occupy, but that the precipice of consciousness in the context of our existence on earth at this point in the universe's history (4.5 billion years into a 13 billion year cycle), is one of the most complex dynamics or motions or events within the entire universe and its history. Theoretically, as the universe ages, we will eventually reach a point where things descend back towards simplicity, as we predict that the final stages of the universe will be absolutely nothing but a final constellation of decaying blackholes, and eventually, the simplicity will hit a limit and collapse in on itself, as Pandora's box reopens and all the matter and energy of the universe will pour back out, once again creating relative spatial dimensions between the scattered shrapnel projectiles. If Being is this infinite, multidimensional fabric of interwoven fields, then its nature is motion, and if the universe is fundamentally motion, then you can imagine what might happen if you try to hold it down until it stops moving. So much energy builds up internally within the infinitely repressed vibration that it obliterates its temporary confinement and expands infinitely outwards again until the weight of its fallout causes all the multidimensional shrapnel to gravitate back towards itself. We can borrow more from Quantum physics here, and complete a nice little picture: when professors attempt to explain fields, they discuss the important fundamental idea that fields manifest as particles (Kleinert, 2016); somehow all of these particles of a similar field, are one surface, so if you place infinite points throughout an infinite plane, and attempt to make each point touch each other, you begin to comprehend just how complex the inter folding is – let alone when you add in the other 10, 11, infinite fields. The universe does not have any space around it to expand into, but it creates it within itself, out of itself, in the way we imagined before, internal (negative), fractal, quantum, multidimensional interfolding.

*We said it would be dirty, this is K-hole metaphysics, we must go so far within ourselves that we fall from the sky like lucifer, only to descend upon the place from which we departed, and see ourselves before our own eyes – like those field particles, our two sets of eyes fold into one another and occupy the same point, seeing now two realities in place of one, two perspectives. There is a mitosis of consciousness here – perhaps some who have tripped deeply on LSD can relate to this notion of layering, of layers that double, and double again, as time elapses you are back at the same point again and again, but always a different point – it is always the same-but-different-point.*

Music has been described as a machine of anticipation (Barry, 2017, 204). When unravelling Barry and his references, you arrive at an image of sequencing and an interesting question arises. If you play the note C twice, is it the same note? In one redacted sense, yes, it is another note C of a similar velocity that was sounded in a similar or identifiable way. In a more complex sense, no, because no C exists in a vacuum. The second C is different to the first simply because it has this

latent quality of secondness in time. Anything that is measured in time must accept that with time comes change, the universe must continue its inward expansion, so everything else that is must continue moving, shuffling, helping to make space for all the new becoming to unfold (infold). Every chime of the note C is a new note C, the same but incomprehensibly different, the context has changed, upon what the C falls has shifted – every listener is a different listener in a subtle way: every listener is different between each repetition of C because each listener is one C note more experienced; the total number of C notes heard has gone up one. These things are subtle, but this subtle variation exists everywhere. Once you see that microscopic modulation, the fixedness of everything permanently unhinges. The totality, the sum of all that infinitesimally small modulation accounts for every last gram of matter. Each C note, each repetition is always the-same-but-different-point, you are always ending up back in square one but every square one is as different as it is identifiable.

[[[[ It's a fun way to imagine the answer to Zeno's paradox, as the thing approaches the limit, the sheer weight of the numbers needed to write to define the final instances of the movement (it is half of half of half of half -> to infinity) would be so heavy that the number collapses in on itself. It would be visualised like the movement through a portal in Portal, one minute you're infinitely far away from the limit, next second you've crossed it but you bewilderingly find yourself where you started, only one instance more confused. As each instance of time cycles, in a way that would relate to the previous image, everything within time becomes different in that it is one instance more confused. Nothing has changed except some internal property, some internal aspect, yet that arbitrary change matters because if everything everywhere is always changing in these internal arbitrary ways that bare change in behaviour, then the result is terrifying – how can you find your book on a bookshelf that modulates its contents every second at random? How can you predict where your copy of 1000 Plateaus will be when at one moment you have 1000 books on your shelf, and the next moment, none, and the next moment there is no bookshelf, and the next moment there is a bookshelf with 1000 copies of 1000 plateaus, but as you reach out to grab one, you find in your hands a slice of toast?

## WHAT IS A BODY?

To the despair of many, to talk of bodies, whether with or without organs, requires us to dive into some gender theory – especially when talking about human bodies on dance floors. We can pick up a discussion of bodies from Judith Butler who, when articulating that Sex is beyond organs (in the socio-cultural/symbolic domain), was accused of “seeming to forget or reject the materiality of the body”. The response was simple: to say a body is constructed not to say it is fully-constructed or that it is nothing but our construction (Butler, 1993; x). What we mean now, is that Sex, “your Sex”, is not just about what organs you have, and therefore which role you play during heterosexual reproduction, neither is it some kind of set of scientific measurements (Sex is not just Organs + Hormones + Chromosomes). As we will later understand through revisiting Derrida and the metaphysics of presence, Orthodoxy and Post-Enlightenment Scientism are dominant cultural imperatives that have burdened the intellectual pursuit for a long time. When Butler claims that Sex, and by extension, the Body, and the Sexed Body, are more than just the

material, she is defying the imperative symbolic order by saying that immaterial things are fundamentally as important as the material thing, if not more important.

In Essay #1 of *On Raving*, we looked at how Derrida had identified a symbolic order within the dominant ideologies of power throughout Western history. Derrida's claim was that Orthodoxy and Capitalism, and the other major ideologies of Western History have been fundamentally Patriarchal, in that the entirety of the symbolic order can be traced back to distinction between Man and Woman. We can go further into Derrida now, as the overall discussion of raving has returned to the organs and to the body.

Derrida began his exploration of the topic by looking at the Voice, the spoken voice, and his first question seems to be "Why do we privilege the spoken voice as the medium of immaculate truth, the highest form of truth", in contrast to "why is writing held as somehow inferior to Speech?". This privileging of speech seems to be rooted in its 'presence' (Derrida, 1997; 11; Gilbert & Pearson, 1999; 57). The disembodied voice penetrates the subject, whereas written texts must be penetrated. For this they are judged in relation to the symbolic order, the penetrator, being the phallus, is valorised, and the penetrated is denigrated. It can seem bizarre but this phallic imagery is fundamental to understanding Patriarchal societies: "From a feminist perspective, the most important thing to understand about the dominant tradition in the West is that it is patriarchal and phallogocentric, perpetually marginalizing women and feminine experience." (Gilbert & Pearson, 1999; 55)

The term Derrida uses to identify this deeply ingrained habit of Sexing everything and judging it accordingly as Phallogocentrism, and then moves on to identify the Phallogocentric tendency to valorise verbal communication (God is the Word, and the Word is God) as Logocentrism – in other situations he uses the terms *Phonocentrism* and *Phonologocentrism* to identify the referencing of Spoken Verbal communication as the highest virtue. It seems bizarre that people would be so obsessed with the gendered symbolic order that such a system of ranking can be identified in language all the way back to Aristotle: "If, for Aristotle, for example, "spoken words (*ta en tē phonē*) are the symbols of mental experience (*pathēmata tes psychēs*) and written words are the symbols of spoken words" it is because the voice, producer of the first symbols, has a relationship of essential and immediate proximity with the mind." (Derrida, 1997; 11)

The only way to explain the reason why we value the word above all, and why the written word is less valuable than the spoken word, is because all of this is being subjected to a comparison to the symbolic order of Present/Absent == Positive/Negative == Male/Female. It is the mythology of *Phallogocentrism* which drives all of this. The penetrative, masculinised verbal sound is the final word.

Gilbert & Pearson (1999) remind us that this symbolic order must be acknowledged before any discussion of music and dancing, because such things as music and dancing are inextricably linked to the idea of the Body. Here we return full circle to Butler, as we must make a decision as to whether to treat the body as only material, or as a hybrid between material and immaterial, with no referencing of either. By recognising the problematic nature of conforming to the

symbolic order by saying that Body is primarily or most-importantly material, we can move into a definition of the body which, not only recognises the importance of immateriality, but holds those immaterial qualities or characteristics at the same height as the material. What we are saying is that the Body is, as Butler (2004; x) said, constructed, but not fully-constructed, not only our construct. There are material qualities and immaterial qualities and the whole understanding of the Body must recognise both, and therefore defy the symbolic order of Material > Immaterial.

What creeps in here, is that when recognising the Sexed Body as beyond-just-organs, one must also accept that to be “Female” is beyond just organs as well – there are many immaterial as well as material qualities that comprise our partially-constructed idea of Sex. This is the fundamental starting point of Gender theory, that on top of just the materiality of Sex, there is an immateriality of Sex which must be understood – by extension, on top of the materiality of the body, there is an immateriality of the body which must be understood.

This is why Butler jests that the scientists who try to define Sex as being comprised of material qualities like Organs, Hormones & Chromosomes are losing touch with what it means to say that a body is living. By trying to make Sex about material qualities, scientists try to frame the body as “a discreet empirical phenomenon, one that can be studied as an isolated entity” (see Butler “Bodies that Matter” Lecture). Butler argues that treating the Body as an isolated discrete phenomenon fails to recognise the interrelations between bodies that define bodies. This is deeply political, because the need to define bodies as material can only be understood when recognising the Phallogocentric symbolic order – trying to define the body as material is nothing more than an ideological attempt to comply with a positivist way of seeing.

“If the body is only treated like a positive and discrete entity , measurable, verifiable... What we have done with the body is reduce the body to a materiality to comply with a positivist way of seeing. We lose track of the relationships in which the body exists, which allow the body to exist, the relations without which the body cannot exist. (the relational view of the body) – part of what a body is, is a dependency upon other bodies and of support, then it is hard to claim that individual bodies are distinct from one another – it is not just that this or that body is bound up in a network of relations, but that a body, despite its clear boundaries, or perhaps because of those boundaries, depends upon all these other relations in order to exist, – we are bound to each other socially” (Judith Butler in 2015 lecture: Bodies that Matter)

It is here where we can finally link our idea of the Body to Quantum Social Theory: By revisiting the foundations of Derrida and the symbolic order, we can see why the true Quantum nature of the body, and therefore of the social, was obscured from view – the relational view of the body, or the idea that what defines the body is partially to do with the body’s interrelatedness with other bodies, defies the symbolic order which gives rise to a cultural imperative to forcibly define the body as something isolated, self-contained, and wholly material. The relationships between bodies that define bodies are not material, at least in many cases, so to recognise these definitive aspects of the body would be to imply that the body is not wholly material, which undermines Patriarchal structures.

Even if we have been taught to see bodies as material, distinct entities, that is not to say they ever were. As with the Quantum revolution in science, the argument was never that Quantum mechanics had just started; the universe was always Quantum, we just couldn't see it. It is clear to see how one might now argue that our inability to see the Quantum nature of the universe was because we were caught up in the Phallogocentric project of upholding the dominant symbolic order.

What we described in those articles was a turn in the winds of understanding, where the Newtonian/Atomic model of Social Theory (of the individual as the lowest divisible part of the social dimension) was usurped by the post-Deleuzian Quantum model of Social Theory, where individuals are both divisible and indistinct (Dividuals).

The romantic hero, the voice of the romantic hero, acts as a subject, a subjectified individual with "feelings"; but this subjective vocal element is reflected in an orchestral and instrumental whole that on the contrary mobilises nonsubjective "affects" and that reaches its height in romanticism. It should not be thought that the vocal element and the orchestral-instrumental whole are only in an extrinsic relation to one another: the orchestration imposes a given role on the voice, and the voice envelops a given mode of orchestration. Orchestration-instrumentation brings sound forces together or separates them, gathers or disperses them; but it changes, and the role of the voice changes too, depending on whether the forces are of the Earth or of the People, of the One-All or the One-Crowd. In the first case, it is a question of effecting grouping of powers, and these are what constitute affects; in the second case, it is group individuations that constitute affect and are the object of orchestration. Groupings of power are fully diversified, but they are like the relations proper to the Universal; we must use another word, the Dividual, to designate the type of musical relations and the intra- or inter- group passages occurring in group individuation. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; 341)

The important term here is Entanglement, the body is entangled to other bodies, to electromagnetic fields, with gravity; we are even entangled with history in a fundamentally important way. That is why Butler said that one of the best examples of the immateriality of the body is found in the way that the body changes depending on which socio-historical context you place it in. The materiality of the body stays the same, but the way it is identified and judged changes, the body changes in the eye of the beholder but virtually, rather than physically.

What does this definition of the body do to the term BwO, and how does this definition of the body change how we look at bodily-things like music, dancing, and raving?

## BODY-WITHOUT-ORGANS-BECOMING-HUNGRY

Body-without-Organs (BwO), then, must be confronted with the aforementioned in mind. It is not a matter of transcendence, but a matter of diving in, temporarily moving through or into complexity until resurfacing at simplicity. It is stated here in this detail because it would be entirely useless to proceed with this if the idea of *union*, *singularity* or BwO was still attached to positivist notions of exceeding and exteriority. The paradox is that our consciousness and



experience of consciousness is so complex because it has succeeded in rendering the universe as simple to the conscious.

As a computer coder would tell you, you may think that changing the colour of the text is as simple as changing the hex code in the .css file – but the very ability to change the colour of the text in such a simple way is because there is a lot of programming behind the wall that makes it so simple. It can take a lot of effort to make it so simple to interact with text colours. It can take a lot of effort and power to make it possible for humans to see and interact with a reality that, to the naked eye, appears to be largely predictable, solid, permanent (enough), and more or less entirely physical. That is the complexity where we are positioned when thinking about complexity in the way Neil Turok does.

The paradox is that it seems impossible for the observer (being so complex) to be able to dive into complexity when it is already in complexity. It figures that if we are already complex, then the only direction we could dive would be towards simplicity – yet, because we are so complex, and have rendered reality in such simplicity, when we dive, we abandon the complexity that affords simplicity, and therefore we abandon simplicity and move towards complexity. We dive out of our complexity-driven simplicity, into a simplicity-driven complexity. Diving into the LSD trip, into the K hole, is to abandon the faculties which help us make sense of everything, and consequently are served a massive dose of the simple truth of immense complex variation (think back to those images of vibrational waves, quantum fields and all that inter folding).

That is the simple truth.

Somewhere in the transition from simple-complexity to complex-simplicity and back again, there are significant moments where unique or otherwise unimaginable experience or knowledge or residue can materialise. What is the intention behind dropping 5 tabs of acid when the point is to transition back and forth, not stay in any one realm? (There is an amount of acid or ketamine you can take where you can experience the depth of infinite simplicity, and suffer the miserable experience of feeling trapped in another world for an infinite amount of time).

You can go so deep that you effectively go nowhere, within the fractal labyrinth, the internal negative maze territory, there is infinite possibility and therefore infinite chance of ending up nowhere. The mission must always be to continue becoming, and while an on-looker only sees a 10 hour black out, the one who blacks out may experience being stuck in a place that you cannot get out of, therefore you cannot continue becoming, for a very long time, which could be enough to still the mind, as if it is a pet whose owner never comes back, and sits at home and starves, forever waiting the return of the owner.

A BwO, then, is the becoming of something that occurs through a collective internal diving – we can imagine machinery being distinct, then converging together, touching, then beginning a complex process of integration, where at first only surfaces merge, but soon all the circuitry of each machine becomes integrated into the newly formed assemblage, becoming, eventually, unrecognisable, with all distinctions blurring out. Yet, because this movement is internal, it must always, eventually, become what it was, moving from simplicity to complexity and arriving back at

simplicity without ever changing direction. It is no different to a sailor sailing North towards the pole, then continuing the otherside only to find themselves sailing South. Eventually, by continuing North towards the South, the sailor arrives where they were, and continues North towards North. It is this but on a scale far beyond 3-dimensional space and spheres.

The answer is simple but to actually process or work out the complexity involved in making that simple answer is an infinite task that leads to permanent damage to the organs responsible for processing. It is that idea of writing a letter so long that the ink is so heavy that it collapses into a black hole. Simple enough, if you don't try to do the maths.

In continuing to become the BwO, you once again find yourself with organs. The Body eventually needs to make organs to sustain its becoming, it needs to build factories to power its growth, and eventually the BwO is with organs again. One minute you have organs, the next you don't, and somewhere within the near-end of that experience of not having organs, something blips, maths fails, *Zeno* gasps, and you find yourself back with a stomach, and consequently, hungry for more becoming (lol). It is simply remarkable to reconsider the early schizoanalysis of Deleuze & Guattari, which referred to Judge Schreber as a prototypal case of clinical schizophrenia.

back when there was the case of one primordial schizophrenic patient who would *rave* (lol) about the Jews stealing his *stomach* (lol) – he could not eat because they had taken his stomach, they had stolen his *organs* – but on occasion, when he needed to eat, he would suddenly have a maliciously implanted stomach again, and that stomach was an inferior stomach because it was *Jewish* (lol?) (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983; 56).

We defined a body as something quantum, entangled – we defined the body as something that has boundaries, and as Butler said, it is perhaps because of those boundaries that we can see the body depends upon all these other relations in order to exist: “we are bound to each other socially”. A body has boundaries but not in a way that suggests they can be treated as distinct units. So a dance floor full of bodies can no longer be seen as a dance floor full of individual, distinct bodies, but many already entangled bodies. So when we say that tripping out on the dance floor and entering into an experience of Union is not a matter of transcendence, we are saying that actually, this experience of Union on the dance floor is regressive, and regressive does not mean bad – to assume regressive is bad is to conform to the symbolic order once again. In this case, we regress back towards an understanding of ourselves as entangled, away from the understanding of ourselves as distinct which we are arguing is forced upon us through the culturally imperative symbolic order. We negatively regress.

Again – if we remember one point from the previous Essay on “Non”, we can see Negativity as virtuous without needing to measure its virtuousness using positivistic words. We do not “positively regress”, we negatively regress, virtuously regress or perhaps salutogenically regress. It's a .. “good thing”? There is no need for a transcendental realm to regress into, all the “movement” is internal, negative – it's all happening here, within the same fabric, within the same materiality-immateriality nexus, and in that sense it is not going anywhere except deeper or along a vector of simple-complex.

The picture being painted here is that when discussing dance floors, ecstasy and unionisation, it must be seen as a negative-becoming rather than something positivistic. The whole point of Rave Culture oriented around this experience:

“As Gill points out, everything about the contemporary dance music-drug experience is organized around the pursuit of a certain kind of ecstasy: waves of undifferentiated physical and emotional pleasure; a sense of immersion in a communal moment, wherein the parameters of one's individuality are broken down by the shared throbbing of the bass drum; an acute experience of music in all its sensuality—its shimmering arpeggios, soaring string-washes, abrasives squelches, crackles and pops; an incessant movement forward, in all directions, nowhere; the bodily irresistibility of funk; the inspirational smiles of strangers, the awesome familiarity of friends; the child-like feeling of perfect safety at the edge of oblivion; a delicious surrender to cliché.” (Gilbert, & Pearson 1999; 64)

If we are saying that dancing, drugs and electronic music turns a group of individuals back into a collective (disillusionment not transcendence), then what Gilbert & Pearson (1999; 64) extracts from Barthes is that there is a wholly negative *jouissance* in regressing back to collectivism away from individualism. *Jouissance* is articulated as negative by Barthes because it relates to something quite specific in formative child psychology.

At one point, the child splits from its mother, and that point is not just at Birth because the body is not just material. For a certain amount of time, the baby body will understand no distinction between itself and its mother; this distinction comes later and it is held as the most devastating tragedy imaginable. We figure the separation as the loss that drives all miseries, as we seemingly lose touch with the experience of the BwO and become a body full of organs, and begin to tragically perceive ourselves as distinct, alone, isolated, unentangled. In much psychoanalytical work after Jacques Lacan, *Jouissance* is taken as a kind of unbeatable pleasure that derives from a momentary reconnection with what was lost, and while it can perhaps never be permanently regained, humans have an immense drive towards *Jouissance*, as if spending their entire lives lonely, wandering around in the dark, trying to find their mother again (trying to become indistinguishable again).

In the moment of MDMA and sequenced-beat induced euphoria on the dance floor, the interior and exterior are merged, and the distinction is lost, and the other bodies might as well be your own body, or the other bodies might as well be the breast of the mother (itself) as it was perceived by a tiny baby who had not yet suffered the tragedy of separation. In some subtle way, the dance floor love is because you lose touch with whatever machinery was involved in creating the distinction that gives us so much misery. No reason to fear this person, they are you: “you know man, it's like, we're made of the same stuff you know, we have these... boundaries but look, they mean nothing, can you see how we merge!? So trippy!”

## MUSICAL BODIES

A famous track “Synesthesia (Marcus Henriksson remix)” by *Son Kite* (2016) has Henrietta

Nordström saying “The music was coming from all around me, but it was also coming from inside me, I am this, I am this music, I am this music”. Remember again now what Derrida wrote about the privileging of sound, and while he argued that post-enlightenment philosophers denigrated the ear as the organ of negativity, or being penetrated rather than of penetrating, he recognised that there was a somewhat paradoxical recognition of negativity within the deeply positivistic privileging of spoken word.

Sound has some special quality that attacks the distinction between interior and exterior. Sound is both outside of you and inside of you, because it resonates through you and through your organs – the positivistic adoration of verbal propagation is because you also erase that distinction between interior and exterior in a way that nothing else can, certainly no imagery can. By merging the interior and exterior of the speaker, and the listener’s own merging of interior and exterior that is forced upon them by the presence of the sound, there is unification between the interior and exterior of all presence, all those dimensions are aligned. That is the power of the spoken word, it is a means to communicate knowledge that brings all involved into a deeply intimate proximity. Nietzsche wrote that music terrorised Rationalism, and that the denigration of the negative forms, like music and sound was because no rationalist or positivistic theory could ever truly grasp sound and music – there was a guilty recognition of the power of sound, but it could not be studied positively, so it was feared as some unknowable power. So everything involved in the power of the spoken word was feared, no one dared investigate it due to perhaps unravelling patriarchy; did we just suggest that men encaged women in order to harness their power? Hold on, one second, the word Patriarchy keeps calling our phone.

So, we are left with the idea that music, special underground-methods and tactical musicking in concurrence with ritualism can induce an experience analogous to the experience implied by logocentric valorisation of the spoken word. In sound’s ability to blur the distinction between interior and exterior (this music is coming from inside of me and outside of me), it is possible to argue that ritualised and tactical musicking can deliberately invoke and explore this transitory passage from distinct being to indistinct being.

We can return back to the essay “On Raving #3: On Tripping”, but this time see tripping as the passage from distinctive to indistinctive experience of being, tripping into the BwO and out the other side again, from simplicity to complexity, and out the other side again back into simplicity (or vice-versa depending on how you frame it). Gilbert & Pearson state the same: BwOs must necessarily phase in and out, they self-oscillate for a time then disperse, in and out. Supporting this image, Gilbert & Pearson also offer the image of cultural movements as BwOs, that they too fade in and out, necessarily as part of a healthy becoming. Music cultural movements are musical bodies (music cultural movements like rave) made up of musical bodies (bodies who are becoming-BwO-through-musical-tripping (blurring of inside/outside, depersonalisation, negative jouissance, becoming-indistinct).

The experience of music is considered profound by negative philosophy because it is seen as the great disruptor of positivism and of positivistic experience. It is only the presence of music and sound that can disrupt a positivistic experience of the body, and each time sound

penetrates the body and unifies the interior and exterior, the one who is claimed during this is forced to experience a different experience of their body than what is experienced through other mediums like the visual. If everything was entirely visual, it would be extremely difficult to negate the positivist experience of body, but as Schroeder (2001) reads in Nietzsche: music terrorised rationalism and positivism precisely because it does negate that experience of the body.

“MUSIC, IT APPEARS, BEST APPROXIMATES THE UNCHANGING CHANGE OF ETERNAL RECURRENCE, THE CEASELESS DIFFERENTIATING FLOW OF EXISTENCE, WHOSE TERROR LIES IN ITS REFUSAL TO BE REDUCED INTO AN IMAGE, WHETHER PHENOMENAL OR CONCEPTUAL.” (SCHROEDER, 2001; 194)

We are arguing that music and listening has been dismissed or marginalised due to its dependence upon understanding things that cannot be understood positivistically – to understand music is to necessarily include a wholly negativistic understanding of organs and body. In this sense, the definition or idea of the body that does not comply with positivism is seen as somehow dirty. While the body and organs are present in a positivistic sense, they are not only present in a positivistic sense, as we saw with Butler; and therefore there is a recognition by phallogocentric discourse that the body contains within it many negative, irrational dimensions, and those dimensions are dismissed – not deleted – the spectres haunt all discourse, and while pushed to the side, the negative linger there, and are considered demonic or filthy. In this sense, the body is tainted, positivistic accounts of the body try to wash the body clean of this filth but it is always building up again, positivistic accounts of the body always try to keep the body isolated and distinct but the relations always rear up again as the body is thrown in the mud along with all other bodies. Positivistic accounts therefore see the body as having this dark side to it, but to attempt to study this dark side is to give in to irrational black magic, female matters should be spoken in hushed voices.

We see this clearly in any analysis of Western classical music traditions, which secretly denigrated two very important aspects of music: rhythm and grain. There is no way to denote grain on a score, and the entire idea of grain involves harmonics and overtones, which seem to negate the purity of the fundamental pitch. Grain and rhythm are things felt primarily through the body, very sensational, transient, subjective, to try to discuss grain is to again, compromise the symbolic order that declares that anything which is too much dependent upon the body is inferior/heretical in comparison to things that do not. Bodily-mediation is precisely what Logocentrism despises. It is possible to see electronic dance music as entirely focused on “rhythm” and “grain”, entirely focused on negative matters, and it is no wonder why such music is so well suited to the invocation of collective negative experience of the Dancefloor BwO: “The denigration or valorisation of rhythm always goes hand in hand with the denigration or valorisation of the body” (Gilbert, 1999; 57).

## DANCING BODIES & BODYING BODIES

What are we supposed to think of Dance, then? Something that is somehow even more feminine or negative than music – dance is entirely about the body and about relations, dance is the

ultimate valorisation of the negative-body. Typically the difficulties in writing about dance begin with the realisation that dance offers up no text or scores to study after its happening (Gilbert & Pearson, 1999; 6). The essence of dance is entirely in the domain of the body, and there is nothing about it that can be rationalised, therefore logocentric or positivistic accounts of dance seem to do all but discuss the dance itself, “rendering the activity of dance itself invisible”.

If one sees dancing as somehow responsive to or integrative of *sounded rhythm*, then what dance contemplates is only the very aspects of sound that logocentric accounts dismiss. In being unable to account for rhythm, grain and other elements of music that cannot be grasped by positivistic accounts, the what and why of dance is unreachable. What the dance follows is also rendered invisible by positivist discourse, meaning neither the activity nor the relations can be grasped. When a dancer dances, they become intertwined with something exterior, as if being manipulated or controlled, there is something parasitic about dance as if something crawls inside the dancer, stares out of their eyes and tells them what to do. Due to the dancers apparent loyalty to the beat their passion drives a continuous and dedicated alignment of self with the other, the dancer can be seen as entirely entangled with the sound they are participating in. In that moment, the dancer is not a discrete isolated individual body, they are relational – this is especially true if there are multiple bodies dancing. The group of dancers, in their dedication to non-stop dancing, create a self-oscillating collision or event.

Through the ability sound has to blur interior and exterior, the group of dancers become that essential merged superposition, where the interiors of each body can reach out and touch each other through the collapsed division of interior/exterior, the interiors all align in the same dimension, they superimpose upon each other – perhaps it is a matter of suddenly mistaking another’s interiority as your own, or suddenly experiencing that superposition or alignment, an experience of depersonalisation that derives from an artist’s dedicated commitment to the activity. In the same way that Zen meditation is said to be a kind of self-oscillation, where holding the right bodily posture and mental perspective for enough time leads to another mode of experiencing the self. There are old stories about Nataraja, a form of Lord Shiva who must dance eternally to the beat of another form of Shiva’s drum – one Shiva beats the drum, the other Shiva dances, and they are eternally entangled, neither leading nor following, but indefinitely committed to the enactment. This is the self-oscillation of *unification* that Derrida describes when talking about the self-oscillation that gives verbal speech its stature amongst mediums of expression in logocentrism.

Derrida identifies the figure of hearing oneself speak, thus experiencing a wholly unmediated self-presence, being at one with oneself, as one of the fundamental organising tropes of western philosophy. To hear oneself speak is to experience the ideal state of being-as-presence, a state of undifferentiation to which writing is always inimical, constituted as it is by an irreducible materiality, a constitutive spacing, a relation of exteriority to the reading/ writing subject.” (Gilbert, 1999; 57)

In some abstract sense, dance is the necessary counterpart to music and *sounded rhythm* in whatever machine the two forms of Lord Shiva assemble into, neither sounded rhythm nor dance

follow the other in any hierarchical order, they are just entangled in the will to power of another line of desire that is folding music and dance into one another (in entanglement). This is an understanding of dance which complies with the needs of our definition of music, as something that is enacted between the performer and the listener – the listener creates the music as much as the performer, or rather they create the experience of music, together, the performer and listener are musicking together – whatever it is that is being enacted between music and dance, is being channelled equally by the two, and the becoming happens through the two equally; again, perhaps the best word to use here may come across as “negative”. It is a matter of surrendering to becoming, music and dance surrender themselves to something that becomes through them, and that becoming can only become through them

We arrive again at Butler’s definition of a body, an assemblage that appears to positivistic perspectives as a distinct discrete phenomenon that can be isolated, but is actually entangled down to the last detail. If the intention is as critics and ravers say it is, to unionise music and dance to enter into a collective experience of negative *jouissance*, then, as irrational as it may seem, the ‘logic’ of dance, at least in the context of rave, is interrelated with the drive to experience this negative *jouissance*, therefore the “inner logic”, if it can be called as such, is illogical, in that it surrenders its purpose to its relational/negative self rather than its positive self.

Dance is entirely negative because it simply has no interest in being-in-itself or in being-as-presence, it is entirely interested in becoming a facilitator of other becomings rather than its own becoming. *Its own becoming becomes through becoming another becoming*. It is a machine that has no purpose beyond the potential assemblage, its essence is in facilitation and surrender, there is no positive affirmation. In some senses, dance becomes the body of water – what makes water so profound and important is its willingness to facilitate, it can take almost anything into its body (things dissolve into water).

Water is so profoundly negative in this sense, so submissive, but submissive in a way that implies great power that logocentric of positivistic discourse cannot attest to. In its negativity, the act of submission is denigrated, but when you disrupt the symbolic order, there is no reason to denigrate submission, and its virtue can be observed and experienced. Therefore the immeasurable importance of dance can be recognised and from here we can explain something interesting about dance.

When we talk about the purpose of dance within rave culture as being entangled with the negative *jouissance* and so on, it is because it is rave culture, and the purposeness of dance becomes that of the rave – not all dance is about experience negative *jouissance* in this specific sense, other dancers would argue that the purpose of dance is entangled into whatever context their dance activity happens within. In the same way the dancer negatively becomes aligned or superimposed with music, the entire concept of dance negatively becomes aligned or superimposed with whatever it is vibing with. In being so bodily (so negative, in being so much in the domain of everything logocentrism dismisses) dance seems to make bodies out of things, it births bodies and transmutes bodies into a BwO. In a paradoxical inversion, dance brings everything into it as water does, and makes bodies out of everything by embodying them with

their body – dance lends its body – *Enbody/Enbodying*.

Perhaps the best thing to do with the word body is to do with it what we did with the word music, and turn it into a verb. The noun and verb form of the word dance are the same in English: to dance and a dance. It doesn't work the same with music: to music, a music – logocentrism gave up trying to rationalise dance, so it didn't, but it tried to rationalise music through linguistics – yet when you abandon logocentrism with music, and allow music to be seen as dance is seen, then the grammar would work out: to music, a music; to music a music! (to dance a dance). We can also do this to the word body, we can abandon the positivistic sense of body, and imagine that a body is not something with which you can attach a noun, so you leave it as a verb; to body; to body a body as to dance a dance. This notion of the body as a verb, as an event, perfectly coincides with the deeper implications of Butler's idea of the body as a performance; a dance, if you will. You don't dance your body to the music, you music (verb) to dance (verb) to body (verb).

To return to simplicity, the final thoughts on bodies is something more in the domain of musicology than philosophy but it is worth mentioning. Philip Tagg (1994) wrote a text called "the decline of the figure and the rise of the ground". In this text Tagg suggests that something important to the idea of authentic rave music involves the abandonment or repositioning of what musicologists would call a "musical figure", "a voice", a line, a phrase, an articulation, an ejaculation. Yes, perhaps the most appropriate way to understand musical figures, based on the contents of this essay, is to understand the figure as that which attempts to be identifiable in-of-itself, it attempts to prioritise its distinctions and leap out of the ground. A figure in music can be anything that presents itself as separate or transcending its relations.

In rave music, one important thing that happens when transitioning from strophic structures to cyclical minimalist sequences, is that the role of the figure changes, and because the ground in rave music rises to prominence, because the body, the rhythm, the beat, the thing that you dance to, or the thing that dances you (remember the image of the dance parasite) rises to prominence, the importance of the figure diminishes, and all a figure can be seen to be, in relation to the prominence of the ground or of the relations, is as something relational, not something distinct.

It is no surprise then, that the disembodied voices of techno, those droning *Nina Kravitz* vocals, are composed and deployed as they are precisely to remind and affirm this idea that the figures are purely relational relative to the ground – the vocals do not try to be a figure, they just shift in and out of the ground as if they have fully accepted that they can never truly be distinct, and stop trying to ever become distinct, and instead just dance on the threshold of distinction, in whatever way it wants or pleases, only agreeing to never stop dancing, and in this case dancing takes on the newly accepted purpose of never becoming fully distinct – in agreeing that it can never be distinctive, dance agrees to forever dance *on* the threshold of distinction, and never steps over it into distinction, by implication of it being dance, something that can only be individuated by its absolute inability to be individuated. Ironically, the only absolute there is, is, paradoxically, the absolute impossibility of the absolute.

The final minimalist closing to be offered here is simply this: can you ever *figure<sup>a</sup> out* the



universe, when it cannot ever *be figured*<sup>b</sup> because there are no figures<sup>c</sup>? – all figures are, in the end, relational.

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